DARK HORSE COMICS®

CYBERPUNK 2077

PSYCHO SQUAD

[#01/04]

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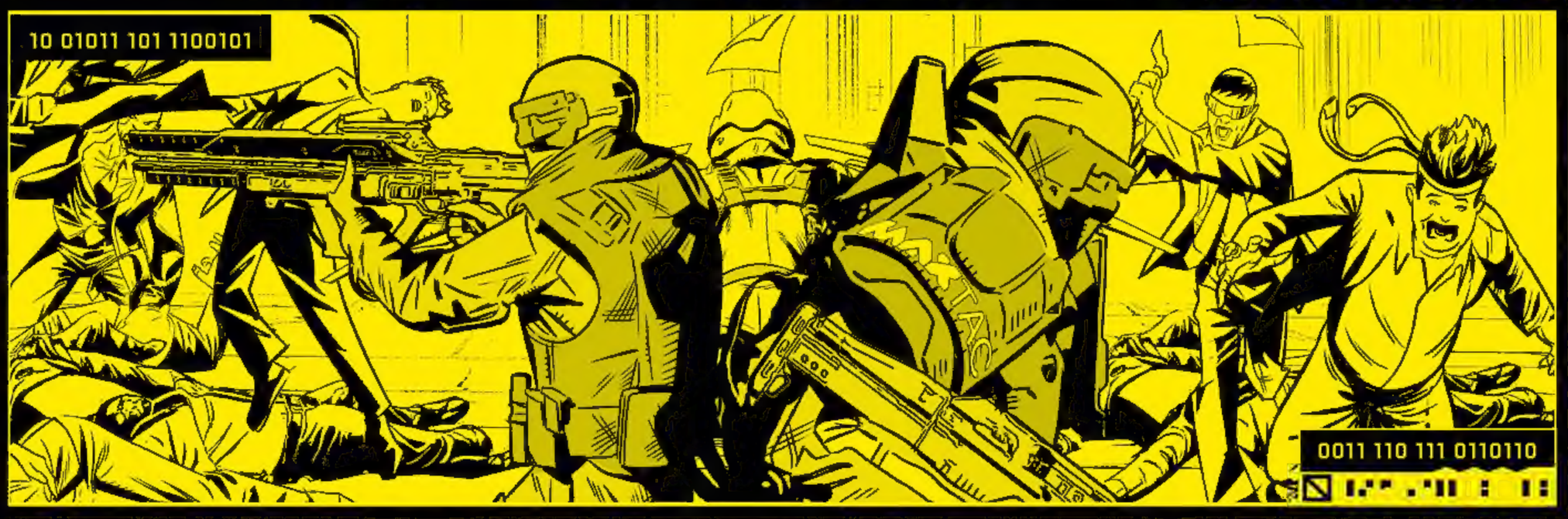
CD PROJEKT RED®

CYBERPUNK 2077

PSYCHO SQUAD



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"*PRESCIENCE SOLUTIONS* MIGHT SOUND LIKE SOME CORPO FINANCE COMPANY BUT IS IN FACT A SKUNKWORKS LABORATORY DESIGNATED FOR WEAPONS INNOVATION AND DEVELOPMENT FOR MILITECH.

ACCESS DENIED

"THEY MAKE MOUNTAINS AND MOUNTAINS OF FUCKING EDDIES HERE.

"THIS IS THE KIND OF OFFICE WHERE THEY HAVE BIDETS THAT SPRAY FRAGRANCED WATER RIGHT UP YOUR ASS.

"THE KIND OF OFFICE WHERE THEY HIRE OPERA SINGERS TO SING IN THE ELEVATORS ON A TUESDAY.

"AS YOU CAN IMAGINE, THEY EMPLOY AN ONSITE *NETRUNNER* TO KEEP THEIR DATAFORT FULLY SECURE. SO NOTHING DEVELOPED HERE IS HACKED OR LEAKED.

"YOU CAN IMAGINE HOW MUCH PRESSURE SAID *DWELLER* IS UNDER. HOW THEY MIGHT BE TEMPTED TO INVEST IN DODGY SLEEP SUPPRESSORS OUT OF KABUKI.

"YOU CAN IMAGINE HOW THAT NETRUNNER MIGHT LIVE AND BREATHE CYBERSPACE TWENTY-FOUR HOURS A DAY. HOW THEY MIGHT FIND THEMSELVES UNABLE TO DETACH, AND GO FULL-ON CYBERPSYCHO."

IMAGINE NO LONGER, BOYS AND GIRLS.

THE NETRUNNER'S NAME IS CHRIS TYBURN. HE IS THIRTY-TWO YEARS OLD AND REPORTEDLY A *QUICKHACKING SAVANT.*

NONE OF WHICH MATTERS, 'CAUSE TODAY TYBURN TOOK OVER THE PRESCIENCE BUILDING AND HAS SO FAR FLATLINED ROUGHLY HALF OF ITS HUNDRED FIFTY EMPLOYEES.

SOUND GOOD?

SO NOW WE ARE GOING TO GO INSIDE AND TERMINATE HIS CONTRACT.

HOOK, YOU'RE NEW HERE. I KNOW SOME SQUADS THINK IT'S A FREE-FOR-ALL OUT IN THE FIELD, BUT IN SPAR DELTA WE KEEP THINGS CLEAN. PROTECT CIVILIANS, BRING IN THE CYBERPSYCHO.

CLEAR?

IT IS AN HONOR AND A PRIVILEGE TO BLOW OFF HEADS WITH YOU ALL.

NUH-UH.

MAXTAC

SHOW THE LIEUTENANT SOME *RESPECT.*

I CAN CONTROL MY OWN SQUAD, THANK YOU, *STEPOVIC* AND *MUT.*

HOW WE LOOKING, *BOWDEN?*

TYBURN IS... GOOD AT THIS. THE WHOLE BUILDING IS UNDER HIS CONTROL.

FORTUNATELY, MOUTH-FROTHING MANIC STATES TEND TO MAKE ONE *SLOPPY,* SOOO...

SECURITY

SECURITY

LOCKED

THERE. THE WINDOWS ARE GONNA STAY PRETTY IMPENETRABLE...

...BUT THE FRONT-DOOR SECURITY SHUTTERS ARE COMING UP NOW.

WELCOME BACK, NIGHT CITY. IF YOU'RE JUST JOINING US HERE ON FTF RADIO, THIS MORNING WE'RE TALKING TO REGINA JONES...

ONE-TIME REPORTER FOR THIS VERY STATION... NOW SELF-APPOINTED AMBASSADOR FOR CYBERPSYCHOSIS!

THANKS FOR DEIGNING TO RETURN TO US, REGINA.

THANKS FOR HAVING ME BACK, JACK. I'VE MISSED THE BOUQUET OF BULLSHIT THAT COMES WITH SENSATIONALIST MUCKRAKING.

NOW OF COURSE, YOU LEFT THE STATION IN ORDER TO LOBBY FOR THE RIGHTS OF BLOOD-SOAKED MONSTERS WHO'D SLIT YOUR THROAT AS SOON AS LOOK AT YOU.

TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT THAT.

CYBERPSYCHOSIS IS AN ILLNESS, ONE WHICH MANY BELIEVE CAN BE CURED.

THESE POOR PEOPLE HAVE OVERLOADED THEMSELVES WITH CYBERWARE, THEN CAN'T GET THE HELP THEY NEED WHEN THEY LOSE TOUCH WITH REALITY.

MAXTAC

THE GROUPS I'VE BEEN WORKING WITH ARE LOOKING FOR BOTH CURATIVE AND PREVENTATIVE MEASURES--WHICH WOULD, WHEN ALL IS SAID AND DONE, BE CHEAPER THAN THE CURRENT REACTIONARY SOLUTIONS.

OH, I SEE. SO YOU'RE SAYING WE SHOULD LET THE PSYCHOS RUN RAMPANT AND KILL AS MANY AS THEY LIKE, ARE YOU?

GREAT IDEA, CALL THE CHIEF OF POLICE...

...TELL HIM WE CAN DEFUND MAXTAC!

BZZZZT

BOOM

RAT TAT TAT TAT

RAT TAT TAT TAT

BOOM

BLAM BLAM

BZZZZT

DID NO ONE PROGRAM THE SECURITY DRONES TO NOT SHOOT AT BADGES?

THEY'RE UNDER TYBURN'S DIRECT CONTROL! ANYTHING ELECTRICAL WITH MOVING PARTS IN THIS BUILDING-- ASSUME IT'S HIS!

EVEN THE VACUUM CLEANERS!

REMOTE UTILITY VEHICLE
NIGHT CITY SERVICE

REMOTE UTILITY VEHICLE
NIGHT CITY SERVICE

VERY REASSURING IN A BUILDING DEVOTED TO SHINY NEW WAYS OF KILLING PEOPLE!

DROP THE HAZE, STEPOVIC. PERHAPS THE REST OF THE SQUAD IS TOO POLITE TO NOTICE THE TENT IN YOUR PANTS...

WHIIIRRR

BANG BANG BANG

BANG BANG

BZZZZZT

...BUT I CAN ALREADY TELL YOU *LOVE* KILLING AS MUCH AS I DO.

SNNNK

BLLLT

SCREW YOU, HOOK.

WUH--?!

BANG BANG BANG

BOOM

I CAN TELL WE'RE GOING TO BE THE BEST OF CHOOMS!

SHE'S *NEEDLING* YOU, STEPOVIC. FIRST-DAY JITTERS.

DON'T RISE TO IT.

HUNDRED PERCENT SUCCESS RATE. FOUR HUNDRED PERCENT KILL RATE.

SERIOUSLY, JACK. THOSE STATISTICS MAY BE OUT OF DATE BY NOW, BUT WE BOTH KNOW IT'S A COMMON REFRAIN WHEN PEOPLE TALK ABOUT MAXTAC.

ARE YOU HONESTLY TRYING TO TELL ME THEY MAKE PEOPLE FEEL **SAFE?**

CLICK

WHIRRRR

OFF

CCTV 1

WOW, REGINA. I KNEW YOU'D BE LIABLE TO MAKE SOME INFLAMMATORY COMMENTS WHEN WE BOOKED YOU, BUT THESE ARE REAL-LIFE HEROES YOU'RE DISPARAGING.

THE MOST ELITE FORCE OF THE NCPD, ONLY DISPATCHED AGAINST THE WORST OF THE WORST. **OF COURSE** THEY END UP IN DEADLY SITUATIONS.

SMASH

THEY HAVE TO MAKE LIFE-AND-DEATH DECISIONS EVERY DAY.

GOD. OH GOD, PLEASE...

PLEASE, PLEASE MAKE IT STOP!

ZAP

PRESCIEN

BZZZT

BZZZT

HELP US!

I--I CAN'T STOP!

Fire exit

SO THESE WOULD BE THE CORPOS WE'RE MEANT TO PROTECT, RIGHT, LIEUTENANT?

IT'S GOING TO LOOK GREAT WHEN THEY GET OUT AND START TEARING THE FACES OFF CIVS IN THE STREET.

WE'RE NOT GOING TO LET THAT HAPPEN, HOOK.

WHEN TYBURN'S DOWN THEY'LL BE IN CONTROL AGAIN, RIGHT, BOWDEN?

HE'S QUICKHACKING THEIR CHROME.

IF WE TAKE HIM OUT, THEY'LL REGAIN CONTROL, BUT--

SHIT.

HE'S BREACHED MY ICE.

SIZZL

HE'S OVERHEATING MY SYSTEMS!

WE'RE *EXPOSED!*

TELL ME WHERE HE IS, BOWDEN. I'LL CUT US A PATH TO HIM.

I TOLD YOU. THAT'S NOT HOW WE DO THINGS, HOOK.

STOK

HUH?

CUHN'T... STUHP...

KOOH

WHERE'S LIEUTENANT MASON?!

I...I THINK I'M *WEARING* HER.

DAMMIT. FALL BACK.

THIS WAY!

BZZZT

I THINK THE BASTARD'S IN MY OPTICS!

WRONG WAY, HOOK! FOLLOW MY VOICE!

SQUAD? I--I CAN'T SEE! THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH MY EYES!

LOST HER. THAT WOMAN WILL NOT LISTEN, DAMMIT.

I THINK THE CYBERPSYCHO'S IN MY ARM, TOO. I CAN'T MOVE IT!

BOWDEN?!

HE'S IN OUR SYSTEMS.

I'M FIXING IT.

NO WAY THIS CORPO GONK OUT-HACKS ME!

MUT! I'M SORRY! IT'S NOT ME!

YEAH, NO SHIT!

I'VE-- UGH--I'VE GOT YOU!

STAY CALM, LET BOWDEN DO HIS THING.

SLAM

FOCUS.

MOVE YOUR FINGERS.

OOF. Y-YEAH.

IT'S MINE AGAIN.

GOOD WORK, BOWDEN.

BOWDEN?

FUCK.

TWO DOWN.

WHERE'S HOOK?

AND WHY'S IT GONE SO QUIET OUT THERE?

BOTH GOOD QUESTIONS...

...THAT I THINK MIGHT HAVE THE SAME ANSWER.

BUT YOU'RE IGNORING HOW DESPITE MAXTAC BEING CHARGED WITH SUBDUING CYBERPSYCHOSIS SUFFERERS, VERY FEW--IF ANY--SEEM TO SURVIVE.

AND OF COURSE THE RUMORS THAT THOSE WHO AREN'T IMMEDIATELY FLATLINED ARE INSTEAD **RECRUITED** INTO MAXTAC'S FOLD.

THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO EVIDENCE--

OH **PLEASE.** I'M SURE ANY OF YOUR LISTENERS WHO'VE HAD A BRUSH WITH A PSYCHO SQUAD WOULD AGREE WITH ME.

THERE'S A VERY REAL CHANCE WE'RE BEING **DEFENDED** BY THE MOST DANGEROUS PEOPLE IN NIGHT CITY--

SEVENTY-FIVE EMPLOYEES.

HOW MANY DID YOU *NOT* FLATLINE, HOOK?

OFFLINE

I RECENTLY UPGRADED MY CYBERAUDIO IMPLANTS. LOW-RANGE AMPLIFIERS AND LEVEL DAMPENERS.

I COULDN'T SEE, BUT I COULD STILL ***HEAR THEIR HEARTBEATS.***

THEY WERE MOVING TOWARD THE DOORS. THEY HAD TO BE CONTAINED.

OFFLINE

AND I KNEW IF I JUST KEPT SLICING UNTIL THERE WERE ***NO MORE*** HEARTBEATS, ONE OF THEM WOULD BE ***HIM.***

THREAT NEUTRALIZED. PEACE ON EARTH RESTORED.

GOD BLESS US, EVERY ONE!

REMEMBER WHAT YOU DID, STEPOVIC?

REMEMBER WHAT YOU DID TO US?

HOOK WAS RIGHT. YOU STILL LOVE IT.

WHAM

TSSSSS

AGREED. YESTERDAY SUCKED.

MAXTAC

TSSSSSSSSSS

WHAT DO YOU WANT, MUT?

I PULLED TYBURN'S MEDICAL FILE.

HE'D SUFFERED FROM INTENSE NIGHT TERRORS HIS ENTIRE LIFE.

PRESCIENCE WERE IN AN EXTREME CRUNCH PERIOD.

THEY HAD HIM WORKING EIGHTEEN-HOUR SHIFTS. HE HAD A NEWBORN AT HOME. MONEY PROBLEMS.

LAST WEEK, HE'D HAD A BOOTLEG SLEEP SUPPRESSOR INSTALLED TO KEEP UP WITH THE GRIND.

YESTERDAY, HE WAS ISSUED A NOTICE THAT PRODUCTIVITY HAD TO INCREASE BY FORTY-FIVE PERCENT.

THEY PUSHED HIM AND PUSHED HIM UNTIL HE FELT LIKE HE HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO OVERLOAD HIS BRAIN WITH CHROME.

WELL, THEY PAID FOR IT IN THE END, DIDN'T THEY?

AND SO DID HE. AND HIS FAMILY.

IT DOESN'T MATTER NOW, DOES IT?

SPILT MILK.

IT DOES. IT HAS TO MATTER.

HOOK WAS SO FAR OUT OF LINE. I'M...I'M GONNA FILE A COMPLAINT.

I'M THINKING IF BOTH OF US FILE TOGETHER, THE POWERS THAT BE WILL UNDERSTAND. HOOK IS EVERYTHING WE'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE.

MAYBE SHE'S ***NOT*** A CYBERPSYCHO HERSELF...

"...BUT SHE'S A *REGULAR* FUCKING PSYCHO."

WELL, HOOK. ANYTHING TO SAY FOR YOURSELF?

OF COURSE, COMMISSIONER FAWLTER.

OF COURSE I ACCEPT.

LIEUTENANT MASON AND I WERE FAST BECOMING THICK AS THIEVES. I WAS GLAD TO AVENGE HER DEATH, AND WILL DO MY VERY BEST TO HONOR HER LEGACY.

AND I KNOW YOU'LL AGREE THE BEST WAY TO DO THAT IS TO BURN EVERY CYBERPSYCHO FROM THE FACE OF NIGHT CITY.

IT WILL BE MY PRIVILEGE TO LEAD MAXTAC SPAR DELTA.

TO BE CONTINUED...

CYBERPUNK 2077

→ ISSUE #2 ON SALE MARCH 19! ←

SON OF ULTRON

"THIS FAN... THIS MONSTER!"